

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 5 1. A computer-implemented method for processing digital images comprising:
 analyzing image data to identify undesired indicia to be obfuscated in an image reconstructed from the image data;
 identifying one or more region in which the undesired indicia appear in the
10 image; and
 replacing image data for the one or more regions with replacement data to render the undesired indicia undecipherable in an image reconstructed from the image data.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the identifying indicia include text
15 defined by pixels of the image reconstructed from the image data.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the indicia are identified by optical character recognition.
- 20 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the replacement data masks the one or more region with a substantially uniform pixel intensity.
5. The method of claim 1, comprising identifying indicia to remain decipherable in the image reconstructed from the image data, and wherein the step of
25 replacing the image data only replaces data for the one or more regions and not for regions in which the indicia to remain decipherable appear.
6. The method of claim 1, comprising allowing desired indicia to remain decipherable in the image reconstructed from the image data.

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7. The method of claim 6, wherein the desired indicia include indicia providing a general description of the image subject matter or a date.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the image data represents a medical diagnostic image, and wherein the undesired indicia include patient identifying indicia.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the image data encodes a grey scale image.

10. A computer-implemented method for processing digital images comprising:

analyzing image data via optical character recognition to identify textual indicia apparent in an image reconstructed from the image data;

identifying one or more region in which the indicia appear in the image; and

replacing image data for the one or more regions with replacement data to render the indicia undecipherable in an image reconstructed from the image data.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the image data represents a medical diagnostic image, and wherein the undesired indicia include patient identifying indicia.

12. The method of claim 10, comprising comparing the identified textual indicia to a list of textual indicia to remain decipherable in the reconstructed image, and wherein textual indicia to remain decipherable in the reconstructed image is not replaced with replacement data.

13. The method of claim 10, wherein the textual indicia to remain decipherable include indicia providing a general description of the image subject matter or a date.

14. The method of claim 10, wherein the replacement data masks the one or more region with a substantially uniform pixel intensity.

15. A computer-implemented method for processing digital images comprising:

analyzing medical diagnostic image data via optical character recognition to
5 identify textual indicia including indicia of patient identity apparent in an image
reconstructed from the image data;

identifying one or more region in which the indicia appear in the image; and

replacing image data for the one or more regions with replacement data to render
the indicia undecipherable in an image reconstructed from the image data.

16. The method of claim 15, comprising comparing the identified textual
indicia to a list of textual indicia to remain decipherable in the reconstructed image, and
wherein textual indicia to remain decipherable in the reconstructed image is not replaced
with replacement data.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the textual indicia to remain
decipherable include indicia providing a general description of the image subject matter
or a date.

18. The method of claim 15, wherein the replacement data masks the one or
more region with a substantially uniform pixel intensity.

19. A system for processing digital images comprising:
means for analyzing image data to identify undesired indicia to be obfuscated in
25 an image reconstructed from the image data;

means for identifying one or more region in which the undesired indicia appear
in the image; and

means for replacing image data for the one or more regions with replacement
data to render the undesired indicia undecipherable in an image reconstructed from the
30 image data.

20. A system for processing digital images comprising:
means for analyzing image data via optical character recognition to identify
textual indicia apparent in an image reconstructed from the image data;
means for identifying one or more region in which the indicia appear in the
5 image; and
means for replacing image data for the one or more regions with replacement
data to render the indicia undecipherable in an image reconstructed from the image data.

21. A system for processing digital images comprising:
10 means for analyzing medical diagnostic image data via optical character
recognition to identify textual indicia including indicia of patient identity apparent in an
image reconstructed from the image data;
means for identifying one or more region in which the indicia appear in the
image; and
15 means for replacing image data for the one or more regions with replacement
data to render the indicia undecipherable in an image reconstructed from the image data.

22. A computer program for processing image data comprising:
at least one computer readable medium; and
20 code stored on the at least one computer readable medium encoding routines
for analyzing image data to identify undesired indicia to be obfuscated in an image
reconstructed from the image data, identifying one or more region in which the
undesired indicia appear in the image, and replacing image data for the one or more
regions with replacement data to render the undesired indicia undecipherable in an
25 image reconstructed from the image data.

23. A computer program for processing image data comprising:
at least one computer readable medium; and
code stored on the at least one computer readable medium encoding routines
30 for analyzing image data via optical character recognition to identify textual indicia
apparent in an image reconstructed from the image data, identifying one or more

region in which the indicia appear in the image, and replacing image data for the one or more regions with replacement data to render the indicia undecipherable in an image reconstructed from the image data.

- 5 24. A computer program for processing image data comprising:
 at least one computer readable medium; and

 code stored on the at least one computer readable medium encoding routines
for analyzing medical diagnostic image data via optical character recognition to
identify textual indicia including indicia of patient identity apparent in an image
10 reconstructed from the image data, identifying one or more region in which the indicia
appear in the image, and replacing image data for the one or more regions with
replacement data to render the indicia undecipherable in an image reconstructed from
the image data.

- 15 25. An image generated by the method of claim 1.

26. An image generated by the method of claim 10.

27. An image generated by the method of claim 15.

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